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Dear Examiner Bleck:

As you requested, I am including preliminary claims for your consideration. The edits incorporate additional limitations from dependent into independent claims, as you proposed. Although the extent of the added limitations seems rather large, I offer them in the interest of expedition, as discussed. I also will consider deleting Claim 33 because you mentioned it should be handled separately.

Further, although the claims were clear, I have attempted to make independent claims even more clear with minor edits that do not affect the scope of the claims. For example, the word "determining" has been substituted with "storing" to more clearly recite my invention and to avoid using the verb "to determine" twice in the same paragraph. This minor change is amply supported in the specification, for example:

"... an authorization database is provided and/or programmed for storing information regarding accounting personnel who are allowed only to access the financial records or component portions of records relating to financial information of a patient." (page 21)

"... an authorization database is provided for storing information regarding friends and family selected by a patient to have access to the patient's records." (page 21)

"Likewise, the patient may choose to allow another group of persons to have access to records relating to care and treatment for the other condition only. . . . In this regard, the authorization database could be programmed to separately store and identify all the persons allowed to access records pertaining to the care and treatment of one condition only and separately identify all the person allowed to access records pertaining to the care and treatment of another condition." (page 22)

Another minor change is also for increased clarity. The many limitations added into the independent claims during the phases of prosecution has made them a bit difficult to read now. Thus, I take this opportunity to clarify some without changing their scope. Rather than recite:

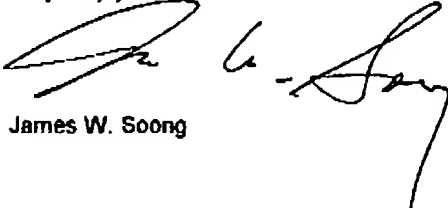
"providing access based on the access rules to a first predetermined group of the component fields of the records when a first access parameter is present, . . . the providing access based on the access rules to the first predetermined group of the component fields including providing access to the first group of individuals . . ."

I would propose this nonsubstantive change for increased clarity:

"providing to a first group of individuals access based on the access rules to a first predetermined group of the component fields of the records when a first access parameter is present . . ."

Please call to discuss further. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



James W. Soong